

Facilitating the Formation of Condominium Associations

Yerevan, Armenia

Background

Since 1993, the City of Yerevan (population 1.2 million) has witnessed a rapid transfer of public housing into private hands. Roughly 80 percent of the public housing stock has been privatized. Until recently, no mechanism existed for private apartment owners to assume responsibility for management and maintenance of their buildings. City “Zheks” (public housing service organizations) continued to provide maintenance, which was minimal at best. In June 1996, the Parliament adopted a national Condominium Law to provide the legal foundation for the formation of condominium associations. To facilitate implementation of the new law, Yerevan developed a comprehensive program to encourage and assist condominium formation.

Innovation

The city’s condominium program consists of three components: establishment of a new Office of Condominium Registration and Implementation (including eight district offices), development of courses and a condominium training center at Yerevan State University, and development of a public awareness program.

Since its formation, the city condominium office has focused on:

- developing a city-wide strategy to organize clusters of residential buildings into logical condominium groups
- encouraging residents to organize and register buildings as condominiums
- training city staff to facilitate condominium conversions and assist residents in the process
- providing incentives for condominium registration
- providing training to directors of newly established condominiums
- encouraging private firms to enter into the fields of property management and maintenance.

Two one-day courses have been developed: one for new condominium directors and one for city staff serving as facilitators. Each course has an accompanying substantive textbook. The public education campaign has been promoting the benefits of private housing and the condominium concept through news releases, television advertisements, an educational video, a handbook of model documents required for condominium organization and registration, and several manuals on various aspects of condominium management.

Results

In the first three months of the program, 200 condominiums with approximately 8,000 apartment units were registered in Yerevan. The city has established a cadre of trained facilitators who can assist residents in organization and registration. The Yerevan State University training courses are being well attended by new association board members. It is anticipated that all public residential buildings will be converted to condominiums within three years.

Summary

To facilitate implementation of the new Condominium Law, the City of Yerevan established a city condominium office, developed courses and a condominium training center, and developed a public education program. In the first three months of the city’s condominium program, 200 condominiums with 8,000 units were registered.

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